

# **HOUSING RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Quarterly Meeting**

**Rhode Island Foundation**

**One Union Station Providence, RI**

**December 9, 2005**

## **M I N U T E S**

**The regular quarterly meeting of the RI Housing Resources Commission was called to order at 9:15am.**

**Commissioners present were: Housing Resources Commission  
Staff:**

**Susan Baxter      Simon Kue**

**Susan Bodington                      Darlene Price**

**Kevin Flynn                      Ray Neirinckx**

**Angela Lovegrove                      Doris De Los Santos**

**Barbara Fields                      Evelyn Quiñones**

**Valerie Voccio                      Noreen Shawcross**

**Brenda Clement                      Rhode Island Housing  
Staff:**

**Marie Straus                      Amy Rainone**

**David Hammarstrom                      Judy Jones**

**Dennis Langley                      Guests:**

**James Dilley                      Gayle Epp- ABT**

**Associates**

**Terence Tierney**

**Nancy Smith Green-HUD**

**Kaveh Hajian**

**Kimberly Burnett- ABT**

**Associates**

**Marie Stoeckel**

**Blanche Higgins-SPP**

**Marie Strauss      Amintha Cinnotti-Providence Planning**

**Monica Staaf      Barbara Sokoloff-Consultant**

**Robert McDonough**

**Pursuant to Chapter 46 of Title 42 General Laws of Rhode Island, notice of this meeting was posted at the State House and at RI Housing Resources Commission offices.**

**Approval of Minutes of September 9, 2005: Motion-David Hammarstrom, Second-Susan Bodington. Minutes approved as presented.**

**Approval of Minutes of October 5, 2005: Motion-Dennis Langley, Second-Monica Staaf. Minutes approved as presented.**

**Due to a problem with required electronic filing with the Secretary of State's office, our September 9, meeting had a notice problem. Therefore, we are requesting a motion to approve the resolutions of the September 9, meeting as recorded in the minutes. Motion-Monica Staaf, Second-Jim Dilley. Motion passed. Brenda Clement abstained.**

Susan Baxter reported that the Neighborhood Opportunities Program distribution process has been combined with members of the Offices of Community Development and Technical Assistance and Homelessness and Emergency Assistance participating. The four chairs will manage the process. Due to other demands on Darlene Price's time, Ray Neirinckx will handle NOP.

Ray described the past round with 25 applications, \$11 million in requests. Ray reviewed the matrix of 8 projects recommended for funding for a total of \$2,655,125, over \$51 million in total costs. Each was described. Barbara Fields and Ray noted that Federal Home Loan funding was approved for the 14 rental units at the former Dreyfus Hotel due to NOP. Monica Staaf asked about the preservation funding. Susan Bodington explained that units funded years ago are going through refinancing with RI Housing and will be targeted for people who are homeless with mental illness. David Hammarstrom asked about the preservation of a single unit. It is part of a land trust program that works well on Aquidneck Island and keeps the home affordable long term.

David also asked about the environmental issues related West Elmwood project. Susan Bodington noted that environmental concerns were all addressed and the cost was built into the underwriting. Noreen Shawcross and Ray will follow-up with the question of the State of RI being the funder should there be a

**problem. What would be the liability to the Commission?**

**Brenda Clement expressed concerns regarding preservation and legislative intent. The chairs of the committees will meet to discuss policy shifts.**

**Dennis Langley moved approval of the resolution to fund recommended NOP Round XIII proposals. Kevin Flynn seconded. Motion approved. Brenda Clement and Kaveh Hajian abstained.**

**Report of the Chair: Susan Baxter reported on the NOP reorganization. She spoke about the challenge to the Lead Hazard Mitigation Act in Superior Court.**

**Commissioner Terence Tierney, who is conducting the case for the Attorney General's Office reported further information. The law did go into effect. Hearings were held this week, and will continue. Dr. Nolan is testifying for the state. Terry is preparing to appeal should the law be struck down. Twenty groups filed Amicus briefs. Susan thanked Terry and Susan Bodington for their work on this. Jim Dilley asked about the implications if it were struck down. It could go back to the General Assembly.**

**Susan announced the special meeting of the HRC on January 13, 2006 in Conference Room A on the second floor of One Capitol Hill, Providence, 02908.**

Six members of the Commission attended the federal Policy Academy to end family homelessness. We are required to submit a plan by mid January. We will combine it with our plan to end chronic homelessness. There has been an influx of families causing us to use churches, a synagogue and hotels. The Governor approved funds for 10 emergency apartments. We are working with RI Emergency Management Agency to try to identify a site for worst case scenario shelter for families when all other resources are used. Brenda Clement noted that this is the last year that churches will open.

**2007 Budget.** The 2007 budget was approved. Noreen noted across the board cuts of approximately 5% due to the target figure of the Budget Office.

At this point Susan Baxter moved to the presentation on the state housing strategy. In order to comply with the statutory time frame, the strategy must go to Statewide Planning and be complete by July. Therefore, we will meet on Friday, January 13, for the Commissioner's approval following their review of the strategy. Susan thanked Gayle Epp, Barbara Sokoloff and Susan Bodington for their work. She noted that the process of developing the strategy was very inclusive with many people involved.

Gayle Epp described the process which began with the state's role in

general to help local communities. She reviewed the Guiding Principles and specific five year goals. This is a conservative estimate of need. A key strategy for increasing funding is bond issue and dedicated source of funding such as a real estate transfer tax or mortgage recording fee as well as creative use of 4% tax credits. All will chip away at the cost, but we will also need density bonuses and other strategies. We need to produce 4 X what we are now, so need 4 x the resources.

Angela Lovegrove was concerned about the emphasis on small households as the Commission on Human Rights is aware of the difficulty of larger families finding housing. Gayle noted that this is a rolling plan that will respond to needs over time. Ray noted that NOP funds have been used to create larger units. Gayle reviewed highlights of how we'd get to 5,000 units. She noted inclusionary zoning is not mandatory; local communities will make the decision. Kaveh Hajian questioned whether this is strong enough. The strategy has "tools not teeth," but good monitoring can be put in place. If they don't produce, local communities may lose funding or control of development. Dennis Langley clarified that lower density than recommended could be used.

Judy Jones prompted a discussion on how this would be presented to the legislature. Amintha Cinnotti noted even cities are concerned about density and we need to monitor that urban legislators are not overwhelmed by suburban legislators.

**Susan acknowledged all for their support and thanked the co-chairs, Peter Walsh and Dennis Langley. Marie Straus thanked the consultants for the response to her concerns about elderly housing.**

**The final business was a motion to provide \$100,000 that was in the budget for the conversion of a building to a permanent location for the Crossroads Family Shelter. David Hammarstrom made the motion; Dennis Langley seconded. Motion passed.**

**Next meeting is January 13, 2005 at 9:00 am, Conf. Room A, One Capitol Hill**

**Meeting adjourned.**